IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application

Inventor(s): Patricia Franklin

SC/Serial No.: 10/697,602

Filed: October 29, 2003

Title: INTEGRATED MULTI-TIERED
SIMULATION, MENTORING AND
COLLABORATION E-LEARNING
PLATFORM AND ITS SOFTWARE

) PATENT APPLICATION

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Art Unit: 3715

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Examiner: Aileen Chyn

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Customer No. 28554

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DECLARATION OF KENNETH EKLUND
PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. §1.131

I, KENNETH EKLUND, declare that:

1. I understand that this Declaration will be filed in the United States Patent and Trademark Office in order to provide factual evidence showing that the invention claimed in the above-identified patent application was completed prior to the date of August 19, 2003.

2. The facts set forth hereinafter to establish that the claimed invention was completed prior to August 19, 2003 all relate to acts which occurred and were carried out within the United States.

3. Patricia Franklin and I met in early December 2001, as a result of her search for a simulations writer. My experience as an interactive writer for games as well as a simulations designer led to fruitful discussions about incorporating learning assessment and outcomes into interactive roleplaying dialogues.

4. Some time before August 19, 2003, Ms. Franklin asked me to work on putting together a prototype of a multimedia e-learning platform. At that time, I began working on the script for the e-learning platform with the assistance of Ms. Franklin and Lucy Carter.

5. In the script we came up with, a user would role play a character in a computer simulation. The role-played character would interact with others in the simulation and the role-played character would be presented with a conflict. The learner would then be presented with, for example, 4 or 5 on-screen options of how to deal with the conflict. The user would choose one of the options using, for example, a mouse or keyboard. Once the user's choice was made, the consequences of that selection were played on the screen for the user.

6. Ms. Franklin's idea that was incorporated into the script was to provide feedback, assistance and mentoring to a learner based on the choices he/she made in the simulation. Ms. Franklin's idea of how to do this was twofold. The first was through the concept of a MetaMentor. The second was through a virtual world which was full of useful resources the learner could avail themselves of. Ms. Franklin discussed both of these concepts with me prior to August of 2003.

7. Prior to August of 2003, we incorporated the concept of MetaMentors into the script as an effective mentoring tool. This was true for at least two reasons. First, the MetaMentors were famous, memorable, capable and respected figures from history. Second, the real-life experiences the MetaMentors would share with the learners would be related to the experience the user just had in the simulation. The parallels between the experience shared by the MetaMentor and the


experience of the learner in the simulation would make the advice offered by the MetaMentor a personal and meaningful experience.

8. Prior to August, 2003, we decided that the MetaMentors would be presented to the learner over the display when the learner needed assistance, or where his/her choice indicated that he/she needed advice. In the script, the software platform would present the learner with a multimedia clip (video or a series of still images) showing the MetaMentor and/or narrated by someone in the voice of the MetaMentor, and illustrating the experience the Meta Mentor shares with the learner.

9. The idea of using live, synchronous interaction and stored, asynchronous events to provide feedback, assistance and mentoring was a concept I discussed with Ms. Franklin before August 19, 2003. The script which was written that incorporated these concepts was also conceived of before August 19, 2003.

10. I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Date: 5/23/06

By: 
Kenneth Eklund